

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~striketrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (currently amended) Device for singulating vertically positioned flat mailings from a stack of mail-(2), comprising:

- ~~comprising~~ an input area-(1), a transport section (12) and at least one singulating stage (14) located adjacent to the transport section (12) and downstream relative to ~~the~~ a direction of travel of the mailings,
- wherein in the input area (1) the stack of mail-(2), aligned in relation to a supporting element-(4), stands on underfloor belts (3) and is held by at least one stack support-(5,5a), and the underfloor belts (3) and the stack supports (5,5a) transport the stack of mail (2) to the transport section-(12),
- wherein the transport section (12) comprises at least two discharge rockers (7a,7b) disposed on top of one another with discharge belts revolving in a driven manner, second discharge belts (13) revolving in a driven manner that are arranged in a fixed manner adjacent thereto and downstream thereof, as well as a driven underfloor belt (10) assigned to the discharge rockers (7a,7b) and to the second discharge belts-(13),
- wherein ~~the~~ a point of rotation of the discharge rockers (7a,7b) is pressed by means of a spring force against the stack of mail-(2),
- wherein a distance sensor (8a,8b) is assigned to each discharge rocker-(7a,7b), said distance sensor emitting a drive start signal when there is a defined stack pressure on the respective discharge rocker-(7a,7b),
- wherein the singulating stage (14) comprises further discharge belts revolving in a driven manner whose speed of travel is higher than ~~the~~ a speed of travel of the second discharge belts-(13),

- wherein the supporting element (4) ends at a defined distance upstream of the undeflected discharge rockers (7a, 7b),
- wherein a flexible, elongated retaining element (19) is disposed, said retaining element being arranged in a resiliently pressed manner from ~~the~~ an end of the supporting element (4) to ~~the~~ a beginning of the second discharge belts (13) and further on to said discharge belts (13) and to the discharge belts of the singulating stage (14),
- wherein the distance (12a) of the supporting element (4) from the downstream end of the second discharge belts (13) relative to the direction of travel is greater than ~~the~~ a maximum permissible length of a mailing,
- and wherein ~~the~~ a control of ~~the~~ drives of the transport section (12) and of the singulating stage (14) is fashioned such that
- at the defined stack pressure on the discharge rockers (7a, 7b) all the drives of the transport section (12) and of the singulating stage (14) are started,
- the drives of the transport section (12) are stopped again or are reduced in speed as soon as a mailing held by the discharge belts of the singulating stage (14) has their speed of travel,
- and the drives of the transport section (12) are restarted or switched to their normal discharge speed when a gap before the subsequent mailing is detected by means of a light barrier line (18) disposed along the path of travel.

2. (currently amended) Device according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein low-pressure chambers (30, 31) are disposed behind the second discharge belts (13) and the discharge belts of the further singulating stages (14), said low-pressure chambers pulling the mailings on to the discharge belts during travel.

3. (currently amended) Device according to claim 2, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein ~~the~~ a low pressure of the low-pressure chambers (30) of the second discharge belts (13) is less than ~~the~~ a low pressure of the low-pressure chambers (31) of the singulating stage (14) located downstream.

4. (currently amended) Device according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein stationary scanning rollers or belts ~~(20)~~ running on the mailings are provided for determining ~~the~~ a mailing speeds.

5. (currently amended) Device according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein an uprighting device ~~(9)~~ with controllably driven friction belts ~~(6)~~ is disposed between the underfloor belts ~~(3)~~ of the input area ~~(1)~~ and the underfloor belt ~~(10)~~ running along the path of travel, said friction belts being drivable such that, when a tilt in ~~the~~ a leading part of the mailing stack ~~(2)~~ is identified by means of deflection of the discharge rockers ~~(7a, 7b)~~, the leading part of the mailing stack ~~(2)~~ is uprighted.

6. (currently amended) Device according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein a metal sensor ~~(35)~~ for detecting staples is disposed at ~~the~~ a transition between discharge rockers ~~(7a, 7b)~~ and second discharge belts ~~(13)~~, said metal sensor ~~(35)~~ emitting, when a staple is detected, a signal to ~~the~~ a drive control which responds thereto by reducing ~~the~~ a discharge speeds and accelerations until the mailing with the staple has left the singulating device including all singulating stages ~~(14)~~.

7. (currently amended) Device according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein ~~the~~ a speed of travel of the underfloor belt ~~(10)~~ is lower than that of the discharge belts of the discharge rockers ~~(7a, 7b)~~.

8. (currently amended) Device according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the point of rotation of the discharge rockers ~~(7a, 7b)~~ is located at their downstream end on the drive axis.